



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Sequoia Crest Fuel Reduction Project		
PROJECT LOCATION	Portions of Section 16, T20S, R31E, MDBM	COUNTY	Tulare
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Jeff Gletne		
ADDRESS	10480 Road 261 Terra Bella, CA 93270	PHONE	559-359-1501

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Sequoia Crest is a subdivision of approximately 100 homes in the southern Sierra Nevada's, located approximately five miles north of Camp Nelson. Access is via Redwood Drive from State Highway 190. The project area is within the Tule River drainage, with an elevation of approximately 6600 feet, and a generally western aspect. Vegetation is mixed conifer forest, including some very large giant sequoias (part of the Alder Creek grove). The treatment area has been identified as a priority project in the Tulare County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The Tulare County Resource Conservation District has received a grant for this work.

Below the project area to the west is a very steep portion of the Giant Sequoia National Monument, which is administered by the Sequoia National Forest. High levels of drought related tree mortality, along with heavy brush cover, have created very high and potentially dangerous fuel loads just below the subdivision. This project is intended to provide a fuel break to help protect the homes in the event of a fire originating from down below.

The project proposes treatments along a narrow strip, 100-300 feet in width, below Alder Drive. In the southern portion of the project area this strip will extend from Alder Drive to the USFS boundary. Ladder fuels, including brush and small trees up to ten inches in diameter, will be removed. Larger trees may have limbs pruned up to eight feet in height. The primary treatment is expected to be cutting with chainsaws and chipping using wheeled or tracked chippers. No excavation will be necessary for the chippers to operate. Mastication may be used in selected flatter areas (less than 40% slope). Piling and burning may also be used in areas away from homes where it is safe to do so.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 15304. Minor Alterations to Land
- ☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- ☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))


REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits under the description for a Class 4 Categorical Exemption pertaining to minor alterations to land as identified in the CEQA Guidelines. After completing an environmental analysis, it has been determined this project will have no significant impact on the environment. This determination is based on field assessments, a CNDDDB and RareFind, and BIOS search, greenhouse gas emission calculations, and an archaeological review completed by CAL FIRE Resource Management staff.

Field review by RPF Gletne confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE Tulare Headquarters in Visalia.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Governor's Office of Planning & Research
NOV 08 2016
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE


Helge Eng, Deputy Director
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

11/3/16
Date